

# Faculty Focus

A free electronic newsletter  
for those involved with  
teaching in Higher Education

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The fall semester is well underway, with mid-terms rapidly approaching. Hopefully you've settled into a workable routine for the semester and are having a productive, enjoyable autumn.

After much anticipation, this fall Magna Publications is happy to announce our all-new "Magna Online Seminars"! Better than audio conferences or webinars, this entirely new conference format delivers the entire conference – audio, PowerPoint, and question and answer sessions via the Internet. By participating in the seminar completely via your computer rather than the telephone, you and your staff will receive a superior presentation that is easy to use and with a much better learning experience. [Check out our upcoming programs!](#)

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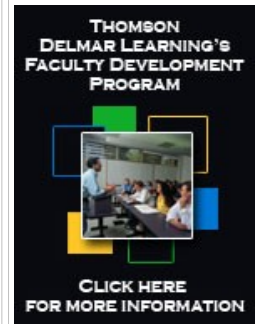
## Creating a Sustainable, Faculty-Driven Assessment Initiative

Meaningful program assessment requires faculty participation. The challenge of getting faculty involved and staying involved lies in convincing them that the benefits of assessment are worth any additional work it generates.

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## 6 Recommendations for the Physicality of Virtual Classrooms

Engrossed in a flow of online teaching, I was suddenly aware of insistent knocking. Because teaching is interrupted only for emergencies, I paused in midsentence to open the door. A student worker handed me a document that I had already accessed online. When asked, the student worker said she was told to distribute the document to faculty. Rather than place the document in either of my mailboxes, she had brought the paper directly to me.



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**Upcoming events:**

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## Enhancing Students' Readiness to Learn

Over the years, I have probably said, "Have you done your reading? Is everyone ready?" more times than I care to count. But as the years passed, it became apparent that more and more students weren't doing their assigned reading and were not ready for class. Several semesters ago, out of sheer frustration, I stopped talking during one of my lectures. I turned up the lights, walked to the chalkboard, and wrote in quite large letters, "Are you ready for class today?" I underlined the word "ready," faced the class, and let about five seconds of silence simmer uncomfortably. Finally I asked the students to respond honestly and anonymously to my question on a sheet of paper. I collected the responses and quickly tallied the results. Seventy-five percent of the class responded "no." Only a few responded "yes." Most interesting were the students who responded, "I think so." I asked with disbelief, "How can you not know whether or not you are ready for class?" To this day, I have not forgotten how they answered:

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## Take the Poll!

Last month's poll question asked, "If given the opportunity, would you try telecommuting?"

For complete survey results and a summary of your comments, click the link below.

This month's survey question is, "What is your department's biggest assessment challenge:

- a) Finding/designing useful assessment tools
- b) Getting faculty involved
- c) Getting administrative support
- d) Lack of resources
- e) Lack of understanding
- f) Lack of time

Please participate!

Simply go to <http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB225QHAF3NQZ> to submit your answer. Answers will appear in next month's Faculty Focus.

[10/19/06](#)

Creating and  
Maintaining a Climate  
of Civility on Campus

[10/26/06](#)

The Learner-Centered  
Classroom: Building  
Rapport and  
Community

[11/02/06](#)

Developing a  
Comprehensive  
Faculty Evaluation  
System

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**Please let us know what topics are important to you! If you have a suggestion for an article for a future issue of this newsletter, contact Director Ginny Haight at [ginnyh@magnapubs.com](mailto:ginnyh@magnapubs.com) or 608-227-8190.**

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